



**Rhode Island Department of Health**  
Three Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5094

[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

Date: June 8, 2009

To:

From: Director of Health, David R. Gifford, MD, MPH

Re: Interim Guidance for H1N1 Virus (Swine Influenza) in RI

### **Individuals with Chronic Medical Conditions and Special Healthcare Needs**

Certain individuals with chronic medical conditions and special healthcare needs are at higher risk for complications from influenza.

Individuals at higher risk for complications from influenza include:

- Infants younger than six months of age.
- Individuals with immune suppression, chronic kidney disease, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, asthma or other problems of the lungs, sickle cell disease, and those on long-term aspirin therapy for chronic disorders.
- Individuals with Down Syndrome who have underlying health problems such as a congenital heart disease.
- Individuals with any condition that affects respiratory function, including neurological conditions such as intellectual and developmental disability, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders, metabolic conditions or other neuromuscular disorders.
- Individuals with poor nutritional and fluid intake because of prolonged vomiting and diarrhea, and those with an underlying metabolic disorder such as medium-chain acyl-CoA dehydrogenase (MCAD) deficiency who are unable to tolerate prolonged periods of fasting.

Because some individuals may not have the ability to report onset or worsening of symptoms, delay in identification of influenza illness can lead to additional complications. Primary care providers of individuals who are at higher risk for complications of influenza should continue to closely monitor patients and communicate with patients and families.

### **Resources**

*Special Needs Emergency Registry*

<http://www.health.ri.gov/pandemicflu/swineflu/FAQ/SpecialNeedsRegistry.pdf>

CDC H1N1 Influenza Site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

*Rhode Island Department of Health Swine Influenza Site:*

<http://www.health.ri.gov/pandemicinfluenza/swineinfluenza/swineinfluenza.php>

*WHO Swine Influenza Site:* <http://www.who.int/en/>